Correspondence.

UNION OF MASTERS AND MEN.

SIR,—It has frequently occurred to me, that an association of masters and workmen in all the branches of the building trade (jointly or separately) would be very beneficial to the interests of that community. Under the present system of trades-unions, the master is frequently a severe sufferer, without any actual benefit to the really deserving workman, for his interest is sacrificed to support men inferior both in character and skill. My plan to remedy this evil would be, to form associations in every county, who should from time to time fix the rate of wages to be given to the operative, *classifying each man according to his abilities*, and admitting none of bad character to the benefit of the institution; and to discountenance all attempts to "strike" for advance of wages during the progress of the works for which he has been engaged. The committee to consist of an equal number of masters and workmen, to receive and decide upon all complaints from workman or employer; a register to be kept of the character and qualifications of every workman to be open to the inspection of all other associations throughout the kingdom, and a fund to be formed by subscription for relief during illness. Workmen would by these means have much less delay in obtaining employment, and receive wages in proportion to their merits, instead of the uniform rate demanded by the trades-unions, by which an experienced man is brought down to the level of the most inferior workman.

I am, Sir, &c., JACK-PLANE.

THE DECORATIONS AT THE SOCIETY OF ARTS.

SIR,—In your journal of December 19th, you have given your readers some remarks upon the decoration of the Society of Arts' hall. May I therefore take the liberty of requesting, as a particular favour, that you will now lay before them the opinion of the council of the society itself, contained in the accompanying official letter from its secretary.

Edinburgh, 27th Feb. 1847. I am, Sir, &c., D. R. HAY.

Society of Arts, Adelphi, London, 12th February, 1847.

SIR,—I have the honour to communicate to you the thanks of the Council of the Society of Arts for your valuable services in the painting and decoration of their great room. They are satisfied that your labours have greatly improved the general appearance of the apartment; more especially, they are satisfied that you have done what they chiefly desired,—that you have not detracted, by your style of decoration, from the effect of the large historical paintings by Barry, which hang on the walls; but the decoration has enhanced the effect of the paintings, and united them in one harmony.

They have also satisfied themselves, and fortified their opinion by the evidence of eminent authorities, that you have judiciously and successfully removed from the pictures the dust and soot which formerly obscured them, without injury to the pictures themselves.

I am therefore now desired to communicate to you their thanks for the manner in which you have fulfilled what you undertook; and as some slight acknowledgment of the esteem in which they hold your services (which so much exceed in value the amount for which you undertook the work), to request, on behalf of the society, that you will accept the accompanying copy of Mr. Barry's etchings of his pictures.—I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant,

J. SCOTT RUSSELL, Secretary.

*** We willingly assist to make public this well-deserved acknowledgment of Mr. Hay's liberality. We need scarcely say it affords no contradiction to the objections to the work, as a work of art, that we felt compelled to make.

THE THEATRE OF THE ROYAL INSTITUTION.

MR. EDITOR,—In your number for Feb. 20, 1847, page 82, I see a note appended to an account of a paper read by Mr. Scott Russell at a meeting of the Institute of Architects, in which Mr. Godwin endeavours to correct the reader, who had stated, that the form of the theatre of the Royal Institution was arranged by "Count Rumford and Sir Humphrey Davy." Mr. Godwin stated, "that the arrangement of the theatre was usually attributed to the late Mr. Webster, the geologist, who built it, he being then an architect." I beg to state the facts. Mr. Webster was a *protegé* of Count Rumford, and, under him, drew out the first ideas of the proposed building, in which I assisted him, and also another young man, of the name of (I believe) Rand, who was afterwards a master carpenter in Poland-street. To Mr. Geo. Sanders, the architect, of Oxford-street, these ideas were submitted; and under his directions, the drawings were altered and perfected, and the theatre built. It was he also, in conjunction with some scientific gentlemen, who made many experiments in sound. The late Mr. Whitehead was the bricklayer, Hamilton, the mason, and Hancock, the carpenter. From the working drawings I made a perspective view of the interior, now hanging in my parlour. No doubt the annals of the Institution will state the facts, and, I think, shew that Sir H. Davy was not known in the matter at all. Mr. Webster assisted the first lecturer in his public duties, in which I have seen him often occupied.

M. C.

P.S. The construction of the roof of this building will richly repay the labour of inspection.

TENDERS FOR HACKNEY UNION.—With reference to the list of tenders for additions to this building, which appeared in THE BUILDER, we are requested by the architect, Mr. Ashpitel, to state that the quantities were not supplied by him, but were taken out by two surveyors, one on the part of the guardians, the other on the part of the builders. Messrs. Mansfield's tender was 5,200*l.*, not 5,500*l.* The circumstance of numerous items in the bills of quantities being for alterations to old works, for which only an approximate estimate could be made, is mentioned as one reason for the great difference between the highest and lowest amounts.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"*Fell.*"—Many thousands have been spent uselessly on the construction of locomotives for common roads.

"*H. C. L.*"—We have not yet found time to answer his question, but will do so.

"*C. B.*"—Notice must be given before beginning to make bricks. The duty, if we remember rightly, is 5*s.* 9*d.* per 1,000.

"*Justitia.*"—The statement is too complex to permit us to offer an opinion. We have no sympathy for those who forward designs in competition not in accordance with the instructions given.

"*New Buildings.*"—We are thankful for any intimation of buildings in progress.

"*G. F.*"—Next week.

Received.—"W. S." "J. C." (Albany-road). "T. P." &c. Crey's "Encyclopædia of Civil Engineering" (Longman and Co.). "The Pictorial Gallery of Arts," Part XXVI., completing the work (C. Knight). "The History of Painting in Italy," translated from Lanzi, by Thomas Roscoe. New Edition, Vol. I. (H. G. Bohn).

ADVERTISEMENTS.

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PERSONS requiring LOANS by way of MORTGAGE, or otherwise, upon any available security, may at all times procure an advance to the extent of from £100 to £130,000, or so much as the property will bear, by applying to MR BRAY, surveyor, at the offices as above.

N.B. To expedite the preparation, personal application at the office would in all cases be better, the party bringing with them the abstract of title, plans, &c.

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DECORATIVE ART SOCIETY, 49, Great Marlborough-street. General Meetings on March, Wednesday, 10th inst., a Paper "On the chemical properties of Theatres," by Mr. Wansey. Wednesday, 31st inst., Communication, "On the influences of Light and Colours." "Attention is solicited to the fact, that the Meetings afford a suitable medium through which, by a free interchange of opinions, and the consequent mutual correction of erroneous or loose impressions, may be formed of those principles which regulate the correct application of Art to its various purposes." Visitors' Tickets may be obtained from E. C. LAUCHER, Hon. Sec., 17, Sussex-place, Kensington.

LECTURES on DESCRIPTIVE ASTRONOMY, during Lent, at the ROYAL POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTION, by Dr. Bachhoffner, on the Mornings and Evenings of Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, with ILLUSTRATIONS, in which the Latest Discoveries are included, accompanied with new and appropriate MUSIC, by Dr. Wallis. LECTURES on the ELECTRO-MAGNETIC TELEGRAPH, on the alternate Mornings and Evenings. Illustrated by a variety of Models, including those of the recent Patents of Messrs. Nott and Gamble. CHEMICAL LECTURES. The OPTICAL EFFECTS include the last beautiful DISSOLVING VIEWS. EXPERIMENTS with the DIVER and DIVING-BELL, &c. &c.—Admission, 1*s.*; Schools, Half-price.

LONDON MECHANICS' INSTITUTION, Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane. PERCY R ST. JOHN, Esq., will Lecture on TEXAS and MEXICO, on Wednesday, 10th and 17th inst.

J. W. MOSS, Esq., will give a MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT, entitled, MUSIC, MIRTH, and MELANCHOLY, in which he will be aided by persons of professional talent on Friday, 19th instant. The Lectures commence at half-past Eight o'clock. Non-subscribers admitted by Tickets, 6*d.* each.

Subscription 6*s.* per quarter, with 6*d.* entrance. Tickets for the quarter just commencing are now issuing.

Prospectuses, containing particulars, may be obtained at the Library. A. McFARLANE, Sec.

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The attention of the public is invited to the following notice:—

The Deeds for carrying out the resolutions of the Shareholders in the Guarantee Fund of the BRITISH MUTUAL LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY are now ready, and the respective Shareholders are hereby requested to attend at the Offices, between the hours of Eleven and Three, to sign and execute the same, when the old shares may be exchanged.

Applications may be also received to the Secretary for the remaining unappropriated shares entitled to the advantages set forth in the following

RESOLUTIONS.

That for the purpose of extending the usefulness of the British Mutual Life Assurance Society, it is desirable to grant loans in connexion with life assurance, and that a guarantee and loan capital of 100,000*l.*, in shares of 10*l.* each, with a deposit of 1*l.* per share, and future calls not to exceed 2*s.* per share, at 60 days' notice, be subscribed for the present Guarantee Fund. The Shareholders' liability to be limited to the number of shares they hold.

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That upon such subsequent division of profits the interest to be paid to the Shareholders shall be at the same rate, not only on the amount paid up on the shares, but also on the capital increased by such accumulations.

And that when the capital, by means of such accumulations, shall have increased to double the amount actually subscribed, it shall be divided and paid to the Shareholders, in discharge of their respective shares.

That in consideration of the anticipated advantages to accrue to the British Mutual by the assurances which will be thus effected, that the British Mutual Society shall have at all times the guarantee of the capital to meet unexpected claims by death, and in consideration also of the 1-8th of the profits from the loans being paid to the Assurance Fund as before mentioned, the British Mutual shall guarantee, from the Society's funds, to the Shareholders the payment of the interest, at the rate of 5*l.* per cent. per annum, payable half-yearly.

By order,

CHARLES JAMES THICKE, Secretary.

17, New Bridge-street, Blackfriars.

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